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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 000847

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: CHILE: RESPONSE TO NPT REPORTING REQUEST

REF: STATE 83600

CLASSIFIED BY: Carol Urban, DCM; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C) Below please find Embassy Santiago's response to reftel, which requested information on current arms control and nonproliferation policymaking processes in key countries in preparation for the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

¶2. (C) Alvaro Guzman, in the Bureau of International and Human Security in the Chilean Foreign Ministry, told Poloff that Chile's attitude and position to towards the CTBT, FMCT, NPT and U.S.-Russian arms control efforts remain the same. Chile supports international nuclear arms control and non-proliferation efforts and is actively involved in international fora to promote global security.

¶3. (C) Guzman explained that Chile is considering re-evaluating the 13 steps proposal from the 2000 NPT RevCon. Guzman also stated that Chile is interested in the de-alerting issue that would reduce the number of deployed nuclear weapons. Chile will likely work with Switzerland and Malaysia on the issue of de-alerting. In the past, Chile worked with Sweden on de-alerting. Chile will not do so in the lead-up to the 2010 NPT RevCon because Sweden currently holds the rotating presidency of the EU and has expressed reservations about advocating for de-alerting on behalf of the entire EU.

¶4. (C) Chile is an active participant in the Nuclear Weapons-Free Zones (NWFZ). According to Guzman, the five geographic NWFZ each have a point of contact, and Chile is the point of contact for Latin America. Moreover, Chile serves as the coordinator for the other regional points of contact.

¶5. (C) The key government personnel involved in nuclear arms control and non-proliferation decision making work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Bureau of International and Human Security. Ambassador Alfredo Labbe is the Director of the Bureau and he leads Chile's policy review process. Marcos Robledo, a foreign policy advisor to President Michelle Bachelet, is a close friend of Ambassador Labbe and has an interest in disarmament issues, but his role in nuclear arms and non-proliferation discussions unclear.

¶6. (C) Chile's Nuclear Energy Commission provides technical advice to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but is not involved in the policy making progress. Chile's armed forces participate in policy discussions about conventional weapons and chemical/biological weapons disarmament, but they do not participate in the nuclear arms control and non-proliferation decision making process.

¶7. (C) Chile is scheduled to hold Presidential elections in December 2009, and the next Chilean President will be inaugurated in March 2010. Guzman emphasized that Chile's policy on nuclear arms control and non-proliferation will remain consistent regardless of the outcome of the election.

18. POC for follow-up information in Embassy Santiago is Patrick
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